

THE
C A S E
OF THE
S T A G E
IN
I R E L A N D;

CONTAINING
The Reasons for and against a BILL for limiting
the Number of THEATRES in

The City of DUBLIN;
WHEREIN THE
Qualifications, Duty and Importance
OF A

M A N A G E R

Are carefully considered and explained,
AND THE
Conduct and Abilities of the present MANAGER
OF THE

Theatre in *Smock-Alley*

Are particularly reviewed and examined.
The Whole occasionally interspersed with critical Observations
ON

O R A T O R Y;

And a Summary of the principal Advantages that must necessarily
accrue to this Kingdom from an

A C A D E M Y,

Connected with the

T H E A T R E.

D U B L I N:

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THE
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It is an Observation made by judicious Foreigners, that the People of *Britain*, (and I hope the People of this Island, from a just Imitation of their Virtues, will ever merit to be esteemed true *Britons*) when Facts are fairly stated, and the Matter clearly and impartially submitted to their Understanding, judge with more Candor and Discernment, than any other Nation in *Europe*: and, it is from a Conviction

that such a ruling Principle of Justice universally subsists among us, that both Parties, in every Controversy, are equally forward to submit their Cause, to the Determination of the impartial Public.

It does not require to be proved, that the public Diversions of a Nation are a public Concern. They are Part of the Privileges of the People. They are of great Importance, as they have a surprizing Effect on the Manners, and are generally Characteristic of the Genius of a Nation. When the *Romans* were a warlike People, they were roused by the martial Exercises of the *Circus*; when they degenerated into effeminate Luxury, they languished at the melting Airs of an *Opera*.

AMONG public Diversions, the Entertainments of the Theatre indisputably stand foremost in Rank, as well for the superior Degree of Pleasure they afford, as for the powerful Influence they have ever had on the Morals of Mankind; and, on this Account, in every civilized and polite Nation of the World, the Theatre has been esteemed an Object worthy of the public Attention.

It is now become no Secret that Mr. *Sheridan*, the Manager of the Theatre in *Smock-Alley*, intends to apply this Session for an Act of Parliament to prohibit the opening of any Theatre in the City of *Dublin*, but that over which he presides; that he called together the Subscribers, who contributed to the building of that Theatre, and who, in some Measure, are interested in its Success, in order to prevail upon them to join him in petitioning the Parliament for that Purpose. What Success this Proposal met with, or how it was relished by the Majority of the Subscribers, I cannot relate with sufficient Certainty; but sufficiently certain

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it is, that the Reason why Mr. *Sheridan*, who for so many Years has been the sole Manager of the only Theatre in this City, in which Plays have been acted, thinks it necessary, at this Time, to apply to Parliament for such a Law, is, that Mr. *Barry* is now building another Theatre, where the Music-Hall in *Crow-Street* lately stood, whereby, Mr. *Sheridan* apprehends, the public Diversions of the Theatre will lose a considerable Proportion of the Excellence and Splendor, with which, for some Years past, they were exhibited under his Influence and Direction: And that he himself is invaded, and may be considerably injured, in his private Property, by such an Innovation.

IF Mr. *Sheridan*'s long and unwearied Diligence and Application in the Service of the Public shall not be thought worthy of our Regards; surely, where the public Interest is so materially concerned, that very Public cannot think it a Matter altogether beneath their serious Consideration.

THE Question then, on this Occasion, is, *whether Mr. Sheridan has any just or reasonable Pretensions to entitle him to the exclusive Privilege he sues for, or not?*

THIS Question may be considered, most properly, under two general Heads:

I. As it concerns the public Utility;

II. As it concerns the private Property of Individuals.

BUT, as the Friends and Admirers of both the excellent Performers, who are most immediately interested in the Event, since this Affair was first publicly talked of, have been employed in arguing

ing for either, as their Attachments or Prejudices severally prompted ; I shall first give a Summary of the Reasons I have heard advanced on both Sides, with as much Candor and Impartiality as my Memory can furnish ; I shall then offer my own Sentiments, without attempting to dictate to any Person's Understanding ; and finally, I shall submit the Whole to the Determination of the candid, discerning, and impartial Public.

THERE is one Thing more, and one Thing only, I think necessary to be premised : I here most solemnly declare, that I enter a Volunteer into this Service, without any Application from Mr. *Sheridan* or any other Person ; and that neither he or any of his Friends were consulted in, or consenting to this Publication : Wherefore I am at Liberty, on both Sides, to deal with Candor and Ingenuity, and am not, by Engagement or Inclination, tied down to prove any particular Proposition. First then,

I. As to what concerns the public Utility.

1. The Friends of Mr. *Sheridan*, who undoubtedly are the Majority, with very great Reason, insist, That the City of *Dublin* is not sufficient to support two Theatres ; that, at present it barely can maintain one ; but, if a second should be set up, in Opposition to that established, which should divide the Profits, the inevitable Consequence must be, that they will ruin one another ; that they will not be able to raise a Fund sufficient to support the Stage with proper Dignity, or to supply it, from Time to Time, with a Variety and constant Succession of the best Performers ; that, by this Means, the Stage, in a little Time, will dwindle into Contempt ; that the Current of the Town will be diverted into some other less-instructive

instructive Channel of Amusement; the Lovers of the Drama will, at length, be totally deprived of the most rational of their Entertainments; which will prove a further Inducement to the Nobility and Gentry of this Kingdom to go abroad, in Search of Pleasures they cannot enjoy at home; to the great Impoverishment, and, perhaps, to the utter Ruin of this unhappy Country.

2. THEY remind us of the lamentable and deplorable Condition in which Mr. *Sheridan* found the Stage, when first he undertook to reform it; and the indefatigable Pains and unlimited Expence he has been at to adorn and improve it: That by his great Learning and Abilities, which his very Enemies cannot dispute, he has, after a Struggle of many Years, shewn the People of *Ireland*, what they had never seen before, in their own Country, a *well regulated Theatre*; a Theatre, that for Magnificence and Splendor, for Taste and Decorum, not only excels those in *London*, but might vie, perhaps, with those of *Athens* and *Rome* in their politest Ages. That no Person now living is capable of filling his Station with equal Dignity and Merit, and after his Death, it will be difficult to find one, who is, every Way, qualified to succeed him; but, while we are possessed of a Person of such undoubted Eminence in his Profession, it would be Madness to run any Chance of displacing him, in Favour of any other, especially of one who is confessedly his Inferior in every Particular. Mr. *Sheridan*, [a] in his present Situation, can no more venture to run any Risques; before he takes any further Steps, he must have an Assurance of Success, established upon some solid and lasting Foundation; whence they very justly conclude, it is the Interest of the

[a] *Sheridan's Oration*, p. 24.

Public, not only to support him, but to make his Situation so easy, that he shall not at any Time be disturbed with the Apprehensions of a Rival, whose weak Efforts cannot enrich himself, but may make the present Manager poor indeed.

3. To all this they add a Consideration of very great Importance, and which cannot fail of having a due Influence on the Determination of the Public. [b] They observe, with Concern, that the Method, hitherto in Use, of educating the Youth of this Kingdom, has been most shamefully defective; [c] that our public and private Schools are under the Direction of a Set of Men, who are not such as have been [d] chosen into this Employment, on Account of their Talents, or such as voluntarily undertook it from a Consciousness of their own Abilities, with a Prospect of making a Figure in that Sphere; but such, as having, in Spight of Nature, been dragged thro' an University Education, and finding themselves after taking a Degree, without Interest or Prospect of any Provision, are forced to have Recourse to that Way of Life to avoid starving; and what is more to be lamented, they [e] teach nothing in our University; an Observation which [f] Mr. *Sheridan*, in his Progress thro' the College, had often Occasion to apply. As the present Course of Learning there [g] cannot qualify young Gentlemen for any Profession, or even to get their Bread in any Way of Life whatever, except that of turning Schoolmasters or private Tutors, without any Prospect of making a Figure in that Sphere; it is therefore, evident as Day, that some Remedy ought to be applied, and that speedily, to this national Misfortune: What this Remedy

[b] *Sheridan's Oration* passim. [c] *Ibid.* p. 13. [d] *Ibid.* p. 11. [e] *Ibid.* p. 19, 20, & passim. [f] *Ibid.* p. 20. [g] *Ibid.* p. 26.

should be, Mr. *Sheridan*, in an Oration, which, without Vanity, may be esteemed the most regular, manly, and noble Piece of Eloquence extant in any Language, has very fully demonstrated; and has proved, beyond a Possibility of Contradiction, that nothing can contribute so much to the Improvement and Felicity of this unhappy Country, as an Academy, established upon rational Principles, in which not only Eloquence, (of which he has shewn himself so great a Master) but all the exterior Ornaments of Life, Dancing, Painting, and Music, should be taught, upon the true Model of the Ancients. Mr. *Sheridan*, in his earliest Youth, had designed a rude Draft, or Sketch, which every Day since he has been polishing, of such a noble Seminary of Education; [b] it was the chief Object of all his Actions and Pursuits in Life; but, persuaded, that an Institution of this Nature could not advance to any Degree of Perfection, without [i] the concurrent Assistance of a well-regulated Theatre; as the same Man, who led the Band there, might be the Instructor in Music: [k] The same, who presided over the Scene-Painting, might be the Preceptor in Drawing; and the same, who gave most Pleasure by his Performance on the Stage, might be the properest Master in Dancing: And as the Theatre could furnish the [l] young Students in the School of Oratory, with constant good Models and Examples, in all the different Species of Eloquence: [m] For this, and for this Reason only, he determined to go upon the Stage, where alone the last Remains of antient Oratory could be found, in order to qualify himself for an Undertaking so arduous, so greatly important to the Interest of his Country. That in prosecuting this great, this

[b] *Sheridan's Oration*, p. 22. [i] *Ibid.* p. 23. [k] *Ibid.* p. 23. [l] *Ibid.* p. 24. [m] *Ibid.* p. 20, 21.

sole Purpose of his Life, he has [n] wasted his Fortune, and, by intense Application and Study, has consumed his Health. And now that he has demonstrated that the [o] Art of Oratory may be taught in this Kingdom, upon as certain Principles, and with as good a Prospect of Success, as it ever was by the Rhetoricians of *Greece* or *Rome* ; now that he has convinced the World, of what himself was fully convinced [p] long before he had finished his Course in the College, that all our other Studies turn to little Advantage to the Inhabitants of *Great-Britain* and *Ireland* ; now [q] that a Method is invented by which our whole System of Education shall be rendered more complete, in every Branch, than is to be found either in the rest of the *British* Dominions or in any Part of *Europe* ; [r] now that this noble and long-laboured Edifice is nearly compleated, and the attic Story only wanting ; [s] shall all his Hopes at once be blasted? shall he reap no other Fruits from a Nine-years incessant Toil, both of Body and Mind, but the Loss of a considerable Sum of Money, by the Whole of his Undertaking, and a broken Constitution? And shall this very Country, for whose Honour and Advantage this incomparable Project was contrived, frustrate the Whole at once, by with-holding the only Means of advancing it to Perfection ; nay, the only Means, by which it can at all subsist? Must not the Public, as well as Mr. *Sheridan*, [t] be sorry that an Art, which cost him so much Pains to acquire, the Propagation of which is fraught with the highest Benefits to the Public, should perish with him ; especially as he himself [u] generously declares he is willing to employ the Residue of his Life, and Remainder of his Health, in doing the best Service in his poor

[n] *Sheridan's Oration*, p. 24. [o] *Ibid.* p. 22. [p] *Ibid.* p. 20. [q] *Ibid.* p. 11. [r] *Ibid.* p. 24. [s] *Ibid.* [t] *Ibid.* [u] *Ibid.*

Power to his unhappy and infatuated Country. All Mankind are agreed that such an Academy is wanting; such an Academy cannot be conducted, but in Concert with a well-regulated Theatre; there can be no well-regulated Theatre in *Dublin*, if more than one be tolerated; consequently, they who wish to see such an useful and necessary Seminary of Education established upon a good and solid Foundation, in this Kingdom, must sincerely desire, and, as far as each, in his Sphere, can contribute, must exert all their Influence, to have a Law enacted, whereby the Number of Theatres in this City shall be confined to one, and that that one shall be the Theatre in *Smock-Alley*, the Stock, on which, like a tender Cyon, the future Academy is to be grafted, which, if timely shone upon by the genial Rays of public Favour, hereafter may flourish and bring forth Fruit, that shall be the Pride and Ornament of its Mother Soil, and the Admiration and Envy of the rest of *Europe*; for, as it is excellently observed, [w] If the Plant be not properly managed in the Nursery, it will hardly ever prove a good Tree.

4. THEY strengthen and enforce all these Arguments, by Authority and Example. *London*, they very justly observe, is six Times larger, contains ten Times more Inhabitants, and is an hundred Times richer than *Dublin*; yet the Legislature there thought it necessary and expedient to limit the Number of Theatres to two; and if two were thought, and upon Experience are found, sufficient for the extended and superb Metropolis of *Britain*; by every Rule of Proportion, one must be adequate to the, comparatively, narrow Limits of this Capital. And this Example proves,

[w] *Sheridan's Oration*, p. 13.

that if the Bill now sued for be found conducive to the public Welfare, no private Consideration should be urged to prevent its passing into a Law; any more than the private Interest of the Watermen on the River *Thames* ought to have been, or was regarded, when the Expediency of building *Westminster-Bridge* was in Debate before the *British* Parliament.

BUT if private Property, which in all Instances should give Place to the public Good, as a Candle goes out in the full Blaze of Noon, must be dragged into this Debate, they are willing to join Issue upon the Matter, and therefore, proceeding to consider the Question,

II. As it concerns the private Property of Individuals.

I. THEY think it is notoriously evident to all, who are not absolutely blinded by Prejudice, That it is Mr. *Barry* invades Mr. *Sheridan's* Property, and not Mr. *Sheridan* that infringes his. Mr. *Sheridan* has been many Years in the quiet and peaceable Possession of the only Theatre in this City; [x] he has expended his private Fortune, and wasted the Flower of his Youth, in improving and adorning the very Structure, as well as in regulating the Conduct of that Theatre. He has always given general Satisfaction as a Manager, as an Actor; he has always deserved well of the Public, and the Public have always crowned him with Applause; they are well contented with the Theatre as it now is, they never had seen so good a one, and do not desire to see a better. If Mr. *Sheridan* had originally suspected that any other

[x] *Oration*, p. 24.

Theatre would have been set up in Opposition to that he undertook to reform, he would have sought the Encouragement his Abilities justly intitled him to, in some more-hospitable Land, where Merit always meets its due Reward ; and then our Stage would have relapsed into the barbarous State, from whence he has redeemed it. But since he hath been so long undisturbed, why should not Length of Time and Prescription, which in all other Cases constitute a good Title, strengthen and confirm his ? Why should Mr. *Barry* intrude himself upon the Town, and invade the undoubted Property of another ? Did he not know all this ? Had he not Notice of Mr. *Sheridan's* Title ? He cannot deny he had. He has therefore proceeded with his Eyes open ; and, if he should suffer a little by it, the Fault is all his own, and many, perhaps, will think he justly deserves it.

2. To this they add a Consideration of another Nature, which, they say, must have great Weight in the Determination of this Affair. The many Persons of Quality, Rank and Distinction, who subscribed to the building of *Smock-Alley* House, if such a Law be not obtained, must inevitably lose their Money ; or their Security must be rendered less valuable and more precarious, if Mr. *Barry* should be permitted to open a Rival Theatre. It is therefore hoped, that Mr. *Barry* will have more Modesty, than to put his private Interest in Competition with that of so many Persons of the first Rank and Distinction in the Kingdom.

UPON the Whole, whether this Question be considered as it regards the public Utility, or as it concerns the private Property of Individuals ; view it on which Side you please, they conclude, from what has been said, it is most manifest to all rational and thinking Men, that the Law, which
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Mr. *Sheridan* is now soliciting to obtain, is not only agreeable to good Policy, Equity and Justice, but, at this Time, is absolutely expedient and necessary.

To all these Arguments Mr. *Barry's* Friends endeavour to give several Answers, which I shall set forth with equal Impartiality; and, that the Reasonings on both Sides may be fairly and readily compared, the Answers shall correspond to the Numbers of the general Head and Division they labour to refute.

MR. *Barry's* Friends, in arguing this Question,

I. As it concerns the public Utility,

I. INSIST, it is very far from being evident that *Dublin* cannot support two Theatres. That several Years ago two Play-Houses, with very indifferent Companies, subsisted tolerably well; that *Dublin* of late is considerably enlarged, as there are, at least, ten Families of Distinction, who now have Houses in Town, for one that resided in it about twenty Years ago, and the Number of Tradesmen of all Kinds must increase in Proportion. It is therefore extremely probable, if there were two good Theatres in this City, stocked with Performers of Eminence and Merit, they would be so far from injuring, they would mutually assist and support each other. For suppose Mr. *Sheridan* was to perform the Part of *Romeo* one Night at *Smock-Alley*, and Mr. *Barry* should appear the next Night, at *Crow-Street*, in the same Character; the Pleasure of comparing their different Manners, Excellencies, or Imperfections, would draw every Person of Taste or Curiosity, who had seen the one, to be present at the other Performance. The Spirit of Criticism would introduce their Names
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into all Conversations ; People would talk themselves into an Attention to what was going on at both Houses, and would crowd to see what had Power to captivate their Attention. The Managers, by every ingenious Art, every Novelty that Invention can suggest, would be under a Necessity of endeavouring to deserve the Approbation of the Public, nor would they dare venture to forfeit it, by any Act of Insolence or Pride. The Emulation that must then naturally arise among the Performers must contribute largely to their Improvement ; and the Liberty and Satisfaction of Mind they must enjoy, by having an Asylum, in another House, to fly to upon any Ill-Usage, must supply them with a continual Freedom of Spirit, to exert all their Talents for our Entertainment : But at present, how can we expect Life or Fire, Gaiety, Vivacity or Humor, from an unhappy, desponding, heart-broken Actor, cramped in his Salary, subject to capricious and unreasonable Forfeitures, and to be treated, behind the Scenes, with all the Insolence of unlimited, *little* Authority ? Besides, as the Town will not then be satisfied with the same Set of Plays, by the same Set of Players, if the Manager of one House exhibits a new Piece, or revives an old one ; if he engages one or more capital Performers from *England*, the other must produce something equivalent, to keep the Balance from turning against him : Numbers, by such Means, would be induced to frequent both Houses, who now never visit one ; and many, who now see but a Play or two, at most, in a Season, would then be tempted to go to twenty. It would grow the Fashion to see Plays. Thus the Stage must necessarily be supported with proper Dignity ; it must be supplied with a Variety and constant Succession of the best Performers ; it will grow into the Esteem of People of Taste and Literature ; the Lovers of the Drama will

will be gratified, and the Current of the Town, it is possible, may be diverted from the present Course of very silly and idle Amusements, to the most rational and instructive Entertainment the human Genius is capable of producing; which may prove some Inducement to those who go abroad in Search of Pleasure, to stay at home, where they can enjoy the most engaging of all Diversions in an equal Degree of Perfection. But supposing this City cannot maintain two Theatres, and suppose a second now opened; that which is best managed, and has the best Company of Performers, must triumph over the Ruins of its Competitor; and surely Mr. *Sheridan* can have nothing to fear on this Account. The Public must be Gainers by the Contest; they will then have the best of two Theatres, whereas now they have no Choice; they are obliged to take up with one, and such a one, as the Manager is pleased to afford them. And what is it to the Public who succeeds, provided they meet with better Entertainment?

AGAIN, if the victorious Manager, having no further Rival to contend with, should grow remiss, but for a single Season, or should furnish the Town with any just Cause of Resentment, the other Theatre, being in different Hands, would immediately be opened; a new Company would be engaged; the Contest would be renewed, 'till a Superiority of Excellence again determined the Victory. Thus, if there were two Managers, the Town might keep them both to Orders, but for some Years past, the sole Manager has usurped the Privilege of governing the Town; and he, who, upon several Occasions, affected to call himself *the Servant of the Public*, has furnished many Instances that prove, he thought himself **THEIR MASTER.**

2. THE Answer to this Argument is so nearly connected with that given to the first Argument under the second general Head, that to avoid Repetition, I shall give them both together, when we come to that Division.

3. THO' they apprehend Mr. *Sheridan* has not fairly represented the Abilities and Qualifications of the whole Body of Gentlemen, who preside over the Schools of this Kingdom; tho' they are certain the Reflections, which in many Parts of his Oration, he has, with equal Ingratitude and Injustice, thrown upon our University, do not deserve an Answer; yet the most sensible of Mr. *Barry's* Friends agree, that a good Academy, in proper Hands, would undoubtedly contribute largely to the Reputation and Prosperity of this Kingdom: And they cannot pay sufficient Honour to the public-spirited Zeal, which has so remarkably displayed itself in many Persons of Worth, Learning and Distinction, who, upon the first Mention of such a Design, formed themselves into a Society, to consider of the most effectual Means of carrying it into Execution.

THE public Utility is the sole Object of this truly patriot Society; they have no private Views. To found a good Academy, and to place it under the Direction of a Person every Way qualified to discharge a Duty so important, is the Whole of their Intention; and Mr. *Sheridan* is no further within their Contemplation, than as he stands, at present, the sole Candidate for the Place of Master and chief Regulator of the intended Academy.

It is therefore hoped, the honourable Society above-mentioned will not consider a short Examination of the Plan proposed by Mr. *Sheridan*, and

of his Abilities to conduct it, as an Attempt calculated to thwart their laudable Endeavours. On the contrary, if it can be proved, that Mr. *Sheridan's* Plan carries with it a constitutional inherent Defect, which, without the Intervention of any other Cause, must inevitably defeat the Ends of its Institution; if it can be demonstrated, that Mr. *Sheridan* is not sufficiently qualified to direct such an Undertaking; it is hoped the Society will esteem a Discovery of these Truths, as a Matter highly conducive to their general Intentions.

MR. *Barry's* Friends would not have intermeddled with Mr. *Sheridan's* Academy; they would have been content with keeping their own Children from going there, and advising their particular Friends to follow their Example, had it not been made the plausible Pretence of the Necessity of the Bill which is now under our Consideration.

IN every good System of Education the Religion and Morals of the Pupil claim a Priority of Attention, by as many Degrees as a downright good Man is a more valuable Member of Society, than a profligate fine Gentleman; or as the everlasting Felicity of the immortal Soul is of greater Concern, than the transitory Embellishments of this perishable Body.

To the Honour of the few, that in a Siege of Temptations have preserved their Virtue unshaken on the Stage, it is notoriously observable, what Kind of Lives are too frequently led by the Female Performers. They are generally handsome, or have the Arts of making themselves appear so; they possess many alluring Accomplishments; they are often seen in the most advantageous Point of View, and their Profession instructs them systematically in every meretricious Subtlety and Art
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that can captivate and subdue the Frailty of our Nature. An Academy connected with the Theatre must necessarily introduce the Pupils to an Intimacy with those Ladies; it is impossible to prevent it; and can we then suppose it possible for a Youth of Spirit, at a Season when every Pulse beats with Desire, and all his Passions are unbroke, to withstand the dangerous, the frequent Opportunities his Situation must furnish of encountering Temptations, that have often been found too powerful for sedate Age? Will not intemperate Draughts of new-tasted Pleasure intoxicate his Understanding? Will not his Attention be diverted from every sober Pursuit of Education? And must not such an Academy become an established Seminary of Lewdness, and all Manner of Debauchery? Whether this will be the Means, as Mr. *Sheridan* proposes, of raising [y] Ireland to her former State of Splendor, when she had the glorious Appellation of THE ISLAND OF SAINTS, is left to every Man in his Senses to determine.

NOR is this all. 'Tis very probable, no small Pains will be taken to possess the Pupils with an Opinion, which Mr. *Sheridan* publicly avows, [z] that the Profession of an Actor, in itself, is not mean or contemptible; on the contrary, he knows of few (the three great ones excepted) which might contribute more to public Benefit, and which consequently should be more intitled to a proportionable Share of public Esteem. And who knows but the Exception, which he has forced in on this Occasion, hereafter may be totally expunged, as injurious to the Context; which, added to many other Inducements already too apt to press upon the Minds of Youth, of which a free Intercourse with the Women is not

[y] *Sheridan's Oration*, p. 32. [z] *Ibid.* p. 21.

the least considerable, may debauch the younger Sons of honourable Families to commence Players; a Course of Life, no Parent would wish to see his hopeful Child engaged in. And indeed Mr. *Sheridan* seems to hint, that he will encourage young Gentlemen to go upon the Stage. He says, the Course of Education [a] *he intends to establish will enable young Gentlemen, when that is finished, to provide for themselves independent of any further Assistance of Money or of Interest.* Now Mr. *Sheridan* is requested to inform the Public, what Course of Life a young Man can take, when his academical Education is finished, in which Money or Interest or both are not necessary, except that alone of going upon the Stage, which is seldom taken up by any who are not destitute of both?

BUT this is not the worst. A more dreadful Consequence is to be apprehended from a Connection between the Academy and the Stage. It is too notorious what a Power ingenious and designing Actresses have often acquired over the Passions, nay the very Souls, of Men of sober Years and extensive Experience; and we cannot suppose incautious Youth less subject to the Enchantment of their Allurements. Is it not dreadful then to think how many Youths, the eldest Hope of noble Families, the Heirs of ancient and opulent Estates, may be drawn in to marry those artful and seducing Women, to the heart-breaking Disappointment of their Parents, the Disgrace of their Families, and total Ruin of themselves? Is not this probable? Nay, if it be possible, what Parent will expose his Son to the Hazard of so dangerous a Trial?

BUT supposing all the foregoing Objections removed, it is, perhaps, a Notion, which never en-

[a] *Oration*, p. 25, 26.

tered into any Head before, to send a Youth, intended for a grave or pious Profession, to the Play-House for his Education. An Acquaintance with *some* of the *Men* upon the Stage would debauch the Morals of young Gentlemen, and lead them into Idleness and Folly. It is also the worst School of Oratory extant; and many public Speakers, who formed themselves on the very best Models on the Stage, were all their Lives remarkable for an affected, pompous Diction and Delivery, which we very well know by the Name of *theatrical*; a Manner that is always ridiculous, as it is unnatural, and tends to turn ordinary Subjects into Burlesque.

THEY grant indeed, that Mr. *Sheridan* is as good an Actor, as it is possible for *him* to be; that is, by the Dint of Labour and Application, he has, in some Measure, surmounted the many natural Impediments he had to combat with; for which they are willing to allow him all due Applause: But if we consider, that his Person is so unhappily formed, as intirely to banish every Thing like the *graceful* from his Action and Deportment; if we reflect, that by Habit he has acquired many unnatural and false Tones, on which, from the limited and narrow Compass of his Voice, he is obliged to ring such unnatural and repeated Changes, as nothing but Custom, which familiarizes the most disagreeable Peculiarities, could force us to indure; if we add to this, a Countenance more adapted to express the harsher Passions, than to put on the modest, the engaging Looks of Persuasion; it is greatly to be feared, that young Gentlemen, bred under his Care, who must naturally conceive a great Opinion of their Master, may mistake these Imperfections for Excellencies, and, by frequent Imitation, may habitually contract Impediments, from which Nature had happily exempted them.

Mr.

Mr. *Sheridan* therefore appears a very improper Model for Youth, as well for those natural Misfortunes, as that his Writings demonstrate he is ignorant of *Grammar*, of the *English Language*, of *Stile*, of *Rhetoric*; nor has he, as shall be shewn hereafter, any Taste in *Dancing*, *Painting*, or *Musick*.

To prove the former of these Allegations, they produce a great Number of Passages quoted from his Oration, which, it is presumed, was written with as much Skill and Care as he is Master of.

To avoid Prolixity, a few Examples only shall be selected; and they, who have Leisure and Curiosity to see the rest, need only read over the Oration, with Attention, and they will discover them in every Page.

FIRST, of Mr. *Sheridan's* Ignorance in Grammar, take the following Instances, obvious to every Capacity.

[b] *I said the chief Motive which SPURRED me on AT PRESENT WAS the Apprehension that this Country may probably be ruined.*

HERE all *Tense* is confounded. *Spurred* should be *spurs*; *was* should be *is*, in the Present Tense, otherwise, they cannot grammatically stand with the Words *at present*, which so strongly mark the Time, that it is wonderful it could escape him.

THE following Quotation composes an intire Paragraph.

[c] *But instead of wasting Time about such speculative POINTS, let the only Consideration now be, how IT may be reduced to Practice.*

HERE we have A FALSE CONCORD; it should be *they*, to agree with POINTS, which is plural.

WE cannot wonder at such puerile Errors in Mr. *Sheridan*, when he declares, that Foreigners can make but little Progress in our Language, [d] because the *English* Tongue has not yet been taught by Rule; (a plain Proof he never read any) tho' we have *Gill's*, *Cooper's* and *Wallis's English* Grammars, all written in *Latin*, principally for the Instruction of Foreigners: The last of which is considered by the Learned, as one of the best Grammars extant of any Language.

AGAIN, he shews he does not understand the common Signification of *English Words*, and that he wants a *Dictionary*, as much as a *Grammar*.

THE second Paragraph of the *Oration* runs thus.

[e] *But I have still a more-powerful Motive to my present Undertaking; a Motive which will not suffer me to be silent without being criminal: For what I have to propose is not with a View meerly to contribute TO THE SERVICE OF MY COUNTRY, but TO PREVENT THE GROWTH OF AN EVIL which may bring on THE RUIN OF IRELAND, if speedy and effectual Means are not used to put a Stop to it.*

So that, as Mr. *Sheridan* understands our Language, to prevent the speedy Ruin of one's Country is not contributing to its Service.

GOD forbid, those Words should bear the same Construction in *England*!

IN another Place he says,

[f] *Our* WHOLE SYSTEM of Education should be rendered more complete, IN EVERY BRANCH, than is to be found either in the rest of the British Dominions, or in any Part of Europe.

A whole System, as these Words are commonly understood by Englishmen, includes every Branch of that System; yet Mr. Sheridan thinks, a whole System may be rendered complete, and yet be defective in some Branches of it.

BUT let us proceed to his *Stile*, and the Flowers of his *Rhetoric*.

[g] THE REVIVAL OF THE LONG-LOST ART OF ORATORY became, therefore, the first necessary Step towards my Design.—In my first Motions towards it, I was only groping my Way IN THE DARK, AND MY JOURNEY ENDED IN A CHAOS, where there could not be said to be Light, but, as MILTON expresses it, rather Darkneſs viſible.—At length I found that THEORY alone WOULD never bring me FAR ON MY WAY; and that continual PRACTICE must be added to furnish me with LIGHTS TO CONDUCT ME TO MY JOURNEY'S END.

MR. Sheridan, it seems, had an uncommon Jaunt of it. When he got to Chaos, where his Journey ended, THEORY, which was the only Horse he had, tho' for aught we know he could, yet would not bring him far on his Way; and tho' he got very safely before to his Journey's End, IN THE DARK, yet, when he was there, he was obliged to call upon Practice to furnish him with Lights to conduct him.—Whither?—To his Journey's End.

Burlesque, which, it has been observed, Persons who form themselves on *theatrical Models* are very apt to fall into, is of two Sorts. One speaks of Things that are great in themselves, in a familiar and vulgar Dialect; such is *Cotton's Travesty of Virgil*. The other elevates little Things, and ordinary Transactions, with all the Pomp and Dignity of Heroics; such is the Tragedy of *TOM THUMB the Great*. And this latter is the Kind, which Persons, trained up at the Theatre, are most subject to.

As for Example; when Mr. *Sheridan* thought it necessary to inform his Audience, that a Riot, which happened in the Play-House, prevented his going on with his Academy, he expresses himself in this Manner:

[b] *But just as I pleased myself with the near View of the Accomplishment of these my Designs; just as the EDIFICE which I thought founded on a Rock, was nearly completed, and the ATTIC STORY only wanting, an EARTHQUAKE came, and in one Night reduced THE LONG-LABOURED PILE to an Heap of Ruins.*

As it is impossible to avoid laughing at this *long-laboured Heap of Bombast*, it was very injudicious to attempt the *pathetic* immediately after it; but when we recollect, that this *Earthquake* was an *artificial one of his own making*, to excuse the Weakness of his *Edifice*, which he knew, in a very little Time, must tumble of itself; his Attempt to move our Compassion at that Incident, becomes likewise a Matter as ridiculous as the former.

If Mr. *Sheridan* will deny that he purposely laid a Scheme to bring about *that* Riot, of which he

[b] *Oration*, p. 24.

so pompously complains, it shall be positively proved upon him, by undeniable Evidence.

BUT, to do him Justice, they confess, Mr. *Sheridan*, in one Instance, has added a considerable Improvement to the ancient Art of Oratory, which can never fail of sending away his Audience pretty well satisfied. We do not read, that *Cicero*, or any of the Ancients, gave a Breakfast to wash down their Eloquence; this Invention was reserved for Mr. *Sheridan*: wherefore many are of Opinion, that when he designs to [i] pronounce his next *Pamphlet*, he should advertize the Town, that on such a Day he intends TO GIVE TEA; a Title, that, Mr. *Foot*e can inform him, has a vast Power to draw and charm an Audience.

UPON the Whole of Mr. *Sheridan*'s Discoveries in the long-lost Art of Oratory, they are very apt to believe, what we have heard him affirm of himself, That *his Journey* (in Quest of it) ended in a Chaos, where there could not be said to be *Light*, but, as *Milton* expresses it, DARKNESS VISIBLE.

THEY proceed to examine Mr. *Sheridan*'s Taste in the several Arts and Accomplishments which he professes to teach in his Academy.

THEY have read in the *Play-Bills*, as Part of the promised Entertainment, that Mr. *Sheridan* was to dance between the Acts: They saw him dance, and they cannot intirely approve of *his* Dancing-master.

THEIR Observations on his Skill in Music shall be related in a more proper Place hereafter. But, when they speak of his Taste in Painting, they insist, (and herein they appeal to the Honourable the *Dublin Society*) that Mr. *West*'s Academy has produced many Boys of twelve or thirteen Years of

[i] *Sheridan's Oration*, in the Title-Page.

Age, who, for Design and Composition, for Proportion and Harmony, for Grace and Expression, for a just Regard to the known Rules of Perspective and Architecture, by ten thousand Odds, excel those Paintings which Mr. *Sheridan* (as a *Specimen of his Taste in that Art*) has lately exhibited for the Admiration of the Public.

THEY solemnly declare, they do not mean to cast any Reflections on the unfortunate Painter; they know him to be a Man of great Merit, in his own Way; they only pity his Necessity, which reduced him, under the Direction of Mr. *Sheridan*, to expose, to public View, such wretched and preposterous Figures, as are every Night hung out on the Curtain of *Smock-Alley* Play-House, like those that inform us where Monsters may be seen. It was answered, that, perhaps, Mr. *Sheridan* could not procure any better. To this it was replied, that the Theatres in *London* are content with plain green Curtains. It never was expected that the Curtain should furnish any Part of the Entertainment; and nothing so much discovers a Depravity or total Deficiency of Taste, as an Affectation of paltry and unnecessary Ornaments; But, when those ill-placed Ornaments are worse executed, it then becomes downright ridiculous Absurdity; and no Person capable of such Vanity should be intrusted with the Care of Youth, especially in the more-refined Parts of their Education, when they are to form, and, by the best Examples, to fix some Standard of their Taste: For there is such an Analogy between the Arts, that he, who is ridiculous in one, can never have a true Discernment or Relish for the rest.

THEY think it an endless Task to observe upon Mr. *Sheridan's* extreme Modesty, which appears in every Line of the Oration; Modesty is an amiable Disposition in every Rank of Life, but in an Ora-

tor, the Appearance of it at least is absolutely necessary. There never was perhaps a greater Character, if considered all together, than *Cicero*; yet, to us, how much has that great Man, who really saved his Country from Destruction, sullied his Fame, by sometimes reminding us of his Services. But Mr. *Sheridan's whole Oration* is a Panegyric upon *himself*; the Scope of which may be thus analysed. This Country, he says, must speedily be ruined, if the People are not taught Oratory; no Person can teach it but himself; he can teach it as well as it was taught in ancient *Greece* or *Rome*; and, that so noble and useful an Art may not perish with him, he recommends himself to the Public, and concludes with this solemn Prayer, which it were Prophaness to transcribe intire; [k] *May the ***** inspire your Hearts with an ardent Zeal to promote an Undertaking which will redound so much to your own Honour; which will be productive of such Benefits to the rising Generation; and hand down such Blessings to Posterity.*

BUT whatever Opinion he may have formed of himself, it is evident he thinks very differently of the Understanding and Sagacity of the Public; and his endeavouring to persuade them, that his *only Motive* for going on the Stage was to qualify himself to keep an Academy, is the grossest Insult that was ever attempted to be put upon the Credulity of any Nation; it being known to all his Contemporaries in the University, as well as to the Public in general, that it was pinching Necessity alone impelled him to that desperate Course, the last sad Refuge of Distress. They consider a young Man, of a liberal Education, struggling with, and almost overpowered by Misfortunes, as an Object of Pity, Compassion and Esteem: But, should he burst his narrow Limits, and, by any lucky Fortune, advance himself to Prosperity; then, to be

[k] *Oration*, p. 32.

ashamed to *own*, nay, in the broad Face of Day, to have the Confidence to *deny*, the State from whence he rose, creates a very different Opinion of him in the Mind of every sensible, modest and ingenuous Person that hears him. And indeed Mr. *Sheridan*, in this Place, betrays some little Defect in *Memory*. In Page 20 of his *Oration*, he says, he had the *Theory of Oratory*, but found *that* alone could not do, without *continual Practice*, which could not be had any where but upon the Stage; but in the Pages 21 and 22, he says, that after he had been *some Years* on the Stage, an *Accident* became the Means of *first* laying open to his View, *the fundamental Principles of the Art*. This, it is thought, is a *Contradiction*; unless Mr. *Sheridan*, by *the fundamental Principles of an Art*, understands something different from *the Theory of an Art*. How then can he talk of wasting his Fortune, [1] and losing a considerable Sum of Money, by the *Whole* of his Undertaking? Let Mr. *Sheridan* make up an Account of all the worldly Substance of which he was possessed at his first Entrance on the Stage; from that let him deduct what he has at present, and what he has squandered in Luxury, Feasting and Extravagance, and the Remainder is all they can allow him to have lost by his Endeavours to reform the Stage, or to found his Academy. But in this Account they expect Mr. *Sheridan* will charge himself with the Receipts of a Benefit Play, which some Years ago was intended to raise A MONUMENT TO SHAKESPEAR. On this Occasion the poor Players generously remitted their Salaries, the Town crowded to the House, Mr. *Sheridan* received all the Money, and the Public, who have a Right to call him to an Account, have never heard more of the Matter. For his Health, which indeed is visibly impaired, they are extremely concerned; and are vastly appre-

[1] *Oration*, p. 24.

hensive, that the Duties of a *Manager*, of a *Player*, and of the *Master of an Academy*, will require more Application, than his Constitution is able to indure.

THERE cannot therefore be the least Reason for making such an Academy the stalking Horse to creep in upon the Law Mr. *Sheridan* has now in View ; as, besides the several Reasons already offered, it is impossible for any one Man, at the same Time, to attend properly to the Duties of two such incompatible Employments. It is therefore most earnestly recommended to the learned and noble Society, who have formed themselves into a Body for the Improvement of Education, as they value the Prosperity of the Design they intend to execute ; as they regard the Good of their Country, to consider, seriously, and attentively, the Objections here offered ; and to demand and receive a satisfactory Answer to each of them, before they absolutely approve of Mr. *Sheridan's* Plan of an Academy, or of him to be the Master of it ; as nothing is more ardently desired, by the Persons who advance these Objections, than to see a *good* Academy founded in this Kingdom, and placed under the Direction of an able and deserving Instructor.

4. THE Case of the Theatres in *London* is not at all similar to that before us ; and the *English* Act of Parliament, which is supposed to limit the Number of Play-Houses in that Metropolis, is either not known or misrepresented. But, in order to understand the true Intent and Meaning of that Act, and the Occasion on which it was made, it is necessary for those who never were in *London* to be informed, that the great Metropolis, commonly known by that general Appellation, consists of the *City of London*, properly so called, the *City of Westminster*, and the *Borough of Southwark*, with vast-extended Liberties and Suburbs ; all connected,
without

without any intermediate Space, except the River *Thames*, which flows between the two former and the latter. Of these the City of *London*, which is the most considerable Part, and the Borough, have for some Ages past been solely inhabited by Merchants, Dealers and Tradesmen; a People, remarkable for Sobriety, Industry, Application and Frugality, in Consequence of which they are become the richest City in *Europe*. The Court, the Nobility and People of Fashion all reside in *Westminster*, which is therefore called the Court-End of the Town, and is the Seat of every Kind of Pleasure. Time out of Mind there has not been a licensed Theatre in the City of *London*, or the Borough. *Drury-Lane* and *Covent-Garden* Theatres are in *Westminster*, above a Mile from the most contiguous Parts of the City, and above three Miles from those that are furthest removed; so that it is a tolerably expensive and troublesome Journey, where Coach-Hire runs very high, for a Citizen and his Family to go to a Play, and return home again. From these Causes it proceeds, that the Citizens of *London* make but a very inconsiderable Part of the Audience at either Theatre; and the People of *Southwark* very rarely are seen there.

ABOUT the Year 1731, an enterprising Genius of the Stage erected a very handsome and commodious Theatre at *Goodman's-Fields*, close to that Side of *London*, which is farthest removed from *Westminster*. This was so great a Novelty to the lower Class of Citizens, who never before were within convenient Reach of such an Entertainment, that every Night the House was crowded with their Wives, Daughters, Apprentices, Journeymen and Servants, who, to secure good Places, stole thither at four o'Clock in the Afternoon; to the great Neglect of their Trades, and Decay of their Fortunes.

THE frugal and industrious Citizens soon perceived the Inconvenience of such a near Inducement to Expence and Idleness. They used various Methods to suppress it ; but, as nothing can be carried there by high Hand, their Efforts proved but vain ; the Mischief still increased. At length the City of *London*, as a corporate Body, petitioned the Crown, that this new Theatre should be suppressed. It happened, about the same Time, that the parliamentary Opposition, which soon after ended in the Overthrow of the then long-ruling Minister, was gaining considerable Vigour. Every Art was used to render the Administration odious or contemptible to the People, who are always glad to laugh at the Expence of their Betters. At the same Time also, “ A certain broken Wit, (as “ *Cibber* in his *Apology* styles him) who since has “ been Author of some of the most ingenious “ Pieces in our Language, collected a fourth Company, who for some Time acted Plays in the “ *Hay-Market*, which House the united *Drury-Lane* Company had lately quitted : This enter- “ prizing Person had Sense enough to know, that “ *the best Plays, with bad Actors*, would turn but “ to a very poor Account ; therefore found it necessary to give the Public some Pieces of an extraordinary Kind, the Poetry of which he conceived ought to be so strong, that the greatest “ Dunce of an Actor could not spoil it.—Upon “ this Principle he produced several frank and free “ Farces, that seemed to knock all Distinctions of “ Mankind on the Head : Religion, Laws, Government, Priests, Judges and Ministers were “ all laid flat at the Feet of this *Herculean Satyr-ist*.” This Account is taken from *Cibber’s Life* : And Tradition further informs us, that the indecent Mimickry of the Actors left no Room to doubt at whom those Libels were directed. The Minister, who knew the powerful Influence such Representations

Representations must naturally acquire over the Minds of the People, with Pleasure adopted the Citizens Address; for he was himself too-wise to propose any Measure, so unpopular. A Bill was therefore brought in and passed, calculated merely to serve his own Purposes, under Colour of obliging the City of *London*, by which it was enacted, under certain Penalties, that no new Play, or an Addition to an old one, should be acted, without a Licence from the Lord Chamberlain; that no Theatre should exhibit Plays without a Licence, and that no Licence should be given to act Plays, but in the City or Liberty of *Westminster*, and the Places of his Majesty's immediate Residence. This is the genuine Substance of the Act, which was more levelled at the Licentiousness of Authors and Managers, than at the Number of Play-Houses, which, had they behaved with Decency and due Respect to their Superiors, might have remained unmolested to this Day. It is true, by this Act, his Majesty is restrained from licencing a Theatre in the City of *London*, or Borough of *Southwark*, unless he should please to make either of them the Place of his Residence: But, in the City and Liberty of *Westminster*, (as in the City of *Dublin*) the King has still the Prerogative of licencing any Number of Theatres he may think proper.

BUT notwithstanding the apparent Necessity which at that Time subsisted for restraining the Licentiousness of the Stage; it was generally considered as a Stretch of ministerial Power, and was not relished by many of the best and wisest Men in *England*. Any Person may learn my Lord *Chesterfield's* Sentiments, on that Occasion, by turning over the parliamentary Debates for the Year 1737. There the Public may see an Example of real Eloquence; manly, rational, natural, simple, unaffected and elegant.

WE have seen at the Time that Law passed there were four Theatres, besides the great Opera-House, open at the same Time in *London*; and the Manager of *Covent-Garden* House has now a dormant Patent in his Possession, under which he may act at any Time he pleases; but he locks it up for the same Reasons that Mr. *Sheridan* locks up the Theatre in *Aungier-Street*. Wherefore Mr. *Barry's* Friends conclude, as the *English* Act was made for Reasons that do not subsist in this Kingdom; as it does not at all limit the Number of Play-Houses in the Metropolis, but only excludes them from the Precincts of some particular Jurisdictions; as this was done at the Request of the Body Corporate of *London*; as, by having two Play-Houses, the proper Emulation and Contest for Superiority is kept on Foot; and, as it is evident if they had more that more could be maintained; it does not at all follow, because it accidentally happens that *London* at present has but two Play-Houses open, that *Dublin*, on Account of its comparative Inferiority, can only support one. But allowing the Calculation produced on the other Side to be just in every Particular, it will prove that *Dublin* ought not to have any Play-House at all, which is more than Mr. *Sheridan* desires; and it is a known Rule in *Logic*, that an Argument, which proves too much, proves nothing. But Experience, the most unerring *Logic*, evinces that in every City, which can support one Theatre well, it is absolutely necessary, there should be a second, to keep the first, or, more properly speaking, the Manager of the first, in Order. And, if there be any Occasion for the Interposition of the Legislature, in this Case, it is to pass a Law, that no Manager of a Theatre, for the future, shall be permitted to acquire any Interest, Term or Property in any second Play-House, whereby theatrical Monopolies will be prevented, which in this, as in other
other

other Cases, have ever been found prejudicial to the Interest of the Public.

To the other Part of the Question,

II. As it concerns the private Property of Individuals,

MR. *Barry's* Friends make the following Answer [m].

I. HAVING, as they imagine, clearly demonstrated that the Public must be considerably injured, if Mr. *Sheridan's* selfish Project should succeed; they think Mr. *Sheridan's* private Interest ought not to be placed in Competition with the public Good. But, supposing the Public unconcerned, and that the Question stood merely on the different Rights and Pretensions of Mr. *Sheridan* and Mr. *Barry*, as Individuals, they hope to make it evident, on one Hand, that Mr. *Sheridan* has not the least Colour of Right to expect such a Monopoly will be created in his Favour, and on the other, that it would be no less an Injury to Mr. *Barry*, at this Time, than to strip him of every Farthing he is worth in the World; to leave him several thousand Pounds in Debt; to throw him into a Gaol for Life, and so totally and irretrievably ruin him and his Family for ever.

THE Town has been much abused, for many Years, by the pompous Oratory of Mr. *Sheridan*. He would have it believed, that to manage a Theatre is a Work of mighty Difficulty, not inferior to that of First-Minister of State: That a Manager should be possessed of an elevated Genius, fine Parts, extensive Learning, a penetrating, lively

[m] The Reader will please to remember, that the Answer to the second Argument, under the first general Head, is referred to this Place,

Wit, a profound Skill in Politics ; but above all he should be a perfect Master of the *Greek Language*; that it very seldom happens, that they, whom Providence hath called to this important Station, have had the happy Advantage [n] of *having gone thro' an intire Course of liberal Education* as Mr. *Sheridan* has done ; with a great deal more in the same Strain, and to the same Purpose.

It is observable, that when Mr. *Sheridan's* surprising Abilities and Address, as a Manager, are the Topics of Panegyric, we are constantly reminded, that he was educated in our University ; that he has taken the Degree of [o] Master of Arts, whence he derives many Advantages that no other Person, [p] *but himself*, can boast of ; but when Mr. *Sheridan's* Academy is the Theme, then indeed we are told, [q] *they teach nothing in the University*.

THE Public, on their Side, think it much easier to take all those fine Things, reported of the Manager, for granted, than to be at the Trouble of refuting them.

BUT let us, for a Moment, draw the Curtain, that veils this mighty Mystery ; let us walk behind the Scenes and take a just Survey of the ponderous Affairs this ATLAS is to support ; let us weigh them in an equal Ballance, and then we shall be able to proportion what Degree of Strength is sufficient for the Burthen.

THE whole Duty of a Manager of a Theatre is comprized under the following Heads :

HE is to keep the Play-House in good Repair ; which should be elegantly, but not gaudily decorated.

THE Stage should be furnished with a competent Number of painted Scenes sufficient to answer the

[n] *Oration*, p. 19. [o] *Ib.* p. 21. [p] *Ib.* p. 26. [q] *Ib.* p. 20.

Purposes of all the Plays in the Stock, in which there is no great Variety, being easily reduced to the following Classes. 1st, Temples. 2dly, Tombs. 3dly, City Walls and Gates. 4thly, Outfides of Palaces. 5thly, Insides of Palaces. 6thly, Streets. 7thly, Chambers. 8thly, Prisons. 9thly, Gardens. And 10thly, Rural Prospects of Groves, Forests, Desarts, &c. All these should be done by a Master, if such can be procured; otherwise, they should be as simple and unaffected as possible, to avoid offending a judicious Eye. If, for some particular Purpose, any other Scene is necessary, it can be got up occasionally.

THE House should be supplied with a Company of the best Performers, of all Kinds and both Sexes, that can possibly be procured, consisting of Players, Musicians, Singers, Dancers, &c. For this Purpose no reasonable Expence should be spared; and, to secure a constant Succession of them, they should be treated with Civility and Politeness, and the strictest Honesty and Punctuality should be observed in fulfilling their Contracts; for they, who are conscious of Merit, are very sensible of Disrespect, and they, whose very Business is Diversion, hate, more than any others, to be obliged to go to Law.

THE Company should be well dressed, more according to the Dignity of the Character represented, than the Rank of the Performer; and if the Manager be himself an Actor, he should never discover any Partiality in the superior Finery of his own Person.

THERE are certain little Articles necessary in most Plays, which, in the Language of the Theatre, are called *Properties*, and are under the Care of a particular Officer, called the *Property-Man*, such as Daggers, Bowls, Caskets, and the like; of which there should be a competent Collection.

THE House should be supplied with all necessary Attendants, a Prompter and his Men, a House-keeper,

keeper, Carpenters, Mechanists, Door-keepers, Candle-snuffers, Scene-shifters, Guards, Mutes, and the like.

It is the Business of the Manager to consider and appoint what Plays should be acted. The old Stock Plays, that have stood the Test of Time, are not to be rejected. Such new ones as succeed in *London* must be a pleasing Gratification to the Curiosity of the Public. He should revise good old Plays that have long lain neglected; and, if possible, a Manager in *Dublin*, for the Honour of the Nation, should sometimes exhibit intire new Pieces, which probably would not be wanting, if Authors were not ill-treated, but were certain of Encouragement. The Play being chosen, the Manager is to cast the Parts; that is, he is to appoint what Player is to perform each Character; he is diligently to attend the Rehearsals, and to see that every Thing is completely ready for the public View, before the Night of Performance. He is then to settle and publish the Bills, and the Play comes regularly on to be acted.

THERE is to be a Treasurer, who, every Night, is to account with, and receive all Money from the Office-keepers. He is to pay the Performers their Sallaries, and to discharge all Bills for Candles, Coals and other incidental Expences. The Treasurer is to account with the Manager for the Ballance, and the Manager should be regularly diligent and careful in the Examination of his Accounts.

As the principal End of the Manager's Duty is to please the Public, he should be strictly careful to avoid giving the least Offence. If he should be so unfortunate, he should be furnished with a sufficient Degree of Humility, to make public Attone-ment for his Misconduct; nor should he, through Pride or Obstinacy, reject the Advice of his cool and sensible Friends on any such Occasion.

THESE

THESE are the important Duties of a Manager ; for the proper Execution of which, no greater Talents, natural or acquired, are necessary than the following.

1. Common Sense ; 2. Common Honesty ; 3. Common Oeconomy ; 4. Common Manners ; 5. An Acquaintance with the Stage ; and 6. A competent Knowledge of the Humours, Taste and Disposition of the Town.

It would run me far beyond my Limits, were I to relate how they apply these Qualifications, severally, to the Duties before enumerated. Let it suffice, that their Arguments were pointed to prove, that Mr. *Sheridan's* Conduct demonstrates he is very deficient in them all, but one.

WE may be convinced the Management of a Theatre requires no *very extraordinary Talents*, from this single Instance; Mr. *Sowdon* managed *Smock-Alley* House for two Years successively, very much to the Satisfaction of the Public.

FROM all which it is evident, the Mystery of Play-House Management is not so great as to deserve any mighty Applause ; and perhaps the Public will think the Trouble sufficiently rewarded, by an Income of, at least, *two thousand Pounds a Year*.

MR. *Barry's* Friends further declare, they are Strangers to the deplorable Condition in which, Mr. *Sheridan* says, he found the Theatre. The House, they remember, was just the same it now is, except that he has stuck up some miserable Paintings, which rather disgrace than adorn it. What then are the mighty Reforms, what the much-boasted-of Regulations, with which Mr. *Sheridan* has so remarkably improved our Theatre? Have we had a greater Variety of good Players brought over to us, under his Direction, than we had

had before? Nothing like it. Such has been his Attention to raise and support an Opinion of his own Superiority and Importance, that it was his constant Policy and Practice, from the Beginning, to banish or keep away every Person, that his Jealousy could suspect, might possibly divide with him the Applause of the Public. Before his Management, the Town was entertained, Season after Season, with the most celebrated Performers from *England*. In those Days, we were visited by *Quin*, *Delane*, *Milward*, *Garrick*; *Mrs. Cibber*, *Mrs. Clive*, *Mrs. Woffington*, and many others; nay, we had *Mr. Sheridan* himself, immediately before he commenced Manager; and surely, he will not say, the Stage was then in a miserable Condition. *Mrs. Woffington* and *Mr. Macklin* are the only *capital Performers*, they remember, he ever obliged us with, before this Season. The former, it is reported, was absolutely forced upon him, when she paid a casual Visit to this Kingdom; and both, at their parting, complained loudly of some little Neglect in the Performance of their Contracts. 'Tis true the Manager permitted *Mr. Mossop* to make his first Appearance among us; but when he perceived the Progress he was making in the Favour of the Town, that Instant, he began to use him so ill, that *Mr. Mossop* was obliged to send him a Challenge, which the Manager considered beneath his Dignity to accept, and for his Insolence in sending it, banished him to *England*, where every Day he improved, 'till he became the Actor we lately saw him. Are we obliged to *Mr. Sheridan* for the admirable Performances of *Mrs. Gregory*, now *Mrs. Fitz-Henry*? The very Reverse. We are told, she first offered herself to him, and upon Examination, he pronounced she never could succeed. She appealed from the Sentence, went to *England*, and the Event has proved either the Extent or Candor of his Judgment. What then has he done? What Novelty has he produced to entertain us? O, several,

veral, that are truly worthy of a *well-regulated Theatre*! One Season, he gave us the *TURK*; again, he amazed us with *MADDOX*. This Nation had never before seen any *Rope-Dancers* that equalled them; and one of them *kicked a Straw* better than any Man in *Europe*. But for this, it may be said, he can plead the Example of one of the Theatres in *London*, from whence Mr. *Sheridan* had taken both those *Rope-Dancers*. 'Tis true, he can; but that Theatre had so long been corrupted with *Smithfield* Entertainments, that Mr. *POPE*, in the *DUNCIAD*, compliments the Manager with the exalted Title of the *ANGEL OF DULLNESS*: And tho' the People of *London* had been accustomed to see Monsters and Absurdities in that House; yet, when the *Turk*, a *Rope-Dancer*, was first exhibited there, the whole Town justly exclaimed against it, as a Degradation of the Theatre; and Mr. *Quin* and Mrs. *Woffington*, on that Account, refused, and actually ceased to perform, during all the Time of *such a shameful Prostitution of the Stage* [r].

BUT our Manager did not stop here; his Genius cannot long confine itself to servile Imitation; he must exceed *his great Example*, or he would not be *himself*.

[r] About the Year 1707, the Manager of *Drury-Lane* introduced a Set of *Rope-Dancers* into that Theatre; for the first Day of whose Performance, he had given out some Play, in which, I (*Colley Cibber*) had a material Part: But I was hardy enough to go into the Pit, and acquainted the Spectators near me, that I hoped, they would not think it a Mark of my Disrespect to them, if I declined acting upon any Stage brought to so low Disgrace, as ours was like to be by that Day's Entertainment. —And the whole Body of *Actors* too protested against such an Abuse of their Profession. —From whence it will be no Wonder, that all due Regards to the original Use and Institution of the Stage should be utterly lost, or neglected. *CIBBER'S LIFE*, Chap. 19, p. 196, *Dub.* 4th Edit.

WE have already seen some Samples of his Skill in Painting ; we have seen him dance ; it is now Time we should have a *Specimen of his Taste in MUSIC.*

THE next Figure we were presented with, on the Stage, was a very extraordinary Musician, who, to a numerous and polite Audience, performed several *Solos* and *Sonatas* on a BROOM-STICK. What Pity it is, Mr. *Sheridan* was not then at the Head of his Academy, that his Pupils might be instructed in such an elegant Accomplishment, by such a *Master in Music!*

BUT from this boasted Theatre, that for Magnificence and Splendor, for Decorum and Regularity, excels all others, may we not expect something more surprizing, than had ever yet been attempted on any Stage, in any Nation ? We surely may, nor shall we be disappointed.

To the Astonishment of all Mankind, a FIRE-EATER was produced at our Theatre ! A Wretch, whose only Excellence consisted in swallowing flaming Links, and supping burning Pitch and Brimstone, with a Ladle ! It was not enough to prostitute the Stage ; human Nature must be degraded ! — But, Thanks to the Town, Nose-led as they had been for many Years before, they could not, they did not bear this Insult, this Outrage offered to the common Sense and Taste of the Nation.

THE only Reformation Mr. *Sheridan* ever made in our Theatre, and to which alone he is indebted for the Reputation of being thought so matchless a Manager, is, his preventing People from going behind the Scenes, or standing on the Stage. Whatever Merit this may claim, the Invention is
not

not his own, as it had long before been the Practice in *London* ; and for its Introduction among us, we are more obliged to the following Accident, than to any Design of Mr. *Sheridan*.

SOME Years ago, a Dispute arose between Mr. *Sheridan* and a Gentleman behind the Scenes, (a Proof that Gentlemen were not then excluded from them) which proceeded to downright Kicking and Cuffing. From the Scenes, the Disturbance got to the Pit ; from the Pit to the Town ; Parties were formed ; and Mr. *Sheridan*, for several Nights successively, was threatened to be attacked in his *close Quarters*. To prevent this, Mr. *Sheridan*, who has ever shewn a very prudent Regard to Self-Preservation, the prime Law of Nature, gave Orders, that, for the future, no Person, who did not belong to the House, should be admitted behind the Scenes ; which pleased the Town so much, that (with the Exception of a few particular Friends) he has ever since continued the Custom ; the only Instance, perhaps, in which he has discovered the least Inclination to oblige the Public.

It is extremely remarkable, when Mr. *Sheridan* (in the Heighth of his Resentment to this ungrateful Town, for unwarily engaging in another Riot, of which himself had premeditatedly planned the Occasion) determined to *punish us*, with his perpetual Absence ; he no sooner left us to bewail the irreparable Loss, than came Mr. *Barry* and Mrs. *Gregory*, to dry our Tears for him, but to make others flow in greater Abundance. The next Season, we were visited by Mr. *Moffop*, and we were proud to see our young Countryman, in so short a Time, become a spirited, manly and capital Performer. At the same Time, we were entertained by that excellent Comedian, Mr. *Woodward*. We all had an Opportunity of seeing *Bobadil*.

badil. But, the third Season, when Mr. *Sheridan* was pleased to *forgive us*, and once more condescended to rescue our unhappy Theatre from barbarous Hands; at his boding *Croak*, as at the Cock in *Hamlet*, all vanished; *Barry, Mossop, Gregory, Woodward*, all were gone! Can this Uniformity of Effects proceed but from an Uniformity of Causes? He might have engaged Mrs. *Fitz-Henry*, at that Time, if he pleased: For, if Report speaks true, she remained all that Season, or the greatest Part of it, unemployed in *London*. But from him the Town can never expect any Indulgence. This Season, indeed, when the World cried Shame upon him, for neglecting her, he was forced to engage her.

At the Approach of this Winter, it was expected the Town would be as full, as it had been for many Years before. What Provision then did the Manager make for the public Entertainment? He introduced a Person, whose chief Merit is Mimickry; and he, that so valuable an Art may not perish with himself, as the long-lost Art of Oratory is likely to do with Mr. *Sheridan*, brought with him a Pupil, whom he is rearing up in his own worthy Profession. This Master does not confine himself to *Taking-off*, as it is modishly phrased, the People of the Stage, (tho' if the Actor mimicked be of Eminence and Merit, it not only injures him in his Fame, on which his Property depends, but corrupts the public Taste, by inducing us, from a distorted Imitation, to despise what is truly excellent in the Original, and consequently to fix our Approbation on some other Object, that, perhaps, truly deserves our Contempt) but in open Violation of all Law, Decency and Order, has the Confidence to expose upon the Stage Gentlemen of good Morals and unexceptionable Characters; Men of grave and learned Professions, of
Family,

Family, Distinction and Fortune, meerly because they have some Peculiarity in their habitual Gesture or Manner of Expression; their Names bandied about as familiarly, as if they had been printed in the Play-Bills. Let any Man for a Moment, suppose the Case his own; let him, if he can, imagine what he must feel from such an Indignity. And who knows where it may stop, or whose Turn it may be next, to be exposed the publick Laughing-Stock, the Scoff, the Scorn, the Jest of all the Town, tho', in every Action of his Life, he has been careful to avoid their Reproach, and truly to merit their Esteem and Approbation? Is the Punishment of the *Pillory* much worse than this? Is this the moral Use for which the Stage was intended? Is it not the highest Pitch of Licentiousness? And can *that Stage*, on which it is encouraged, deserve to be esteemed a *polite, instructive or well-regulated Theatre*?

THUS we have seen what our Stage was before Mr. *Sheridan* came to it; we have felt what it was under his Management; we have found how it was and may be supplied, in his Absence, and again, we experience what it is reduced to on his Return. If such was his Conduct while he held only by the precarious Tenure of the public Approbation; what may we not expect, should he be secured beyond the Reach of their Resentment.

I SHALL omit the most of what Mr. *Barry's* Friends advance, when they compare him to Mr. *Sheridan*, as an *Actor*. They consider them in the several Articles of Voice, Person and Deportment; Feeling, Spirit and Expression: They talk largely of Mr. *Barry's* pathetic Powers, and his masterly Command over all the Passions. Then they contrast them in *Osmyrn*, *Romco* and *Orestes*; in *Lear*, *Richard*, *Othello*, and every other Character

rafter that is common to them both; in all which, they infist, Mr. *Barry* has an apparent Superiority. This is likewise the Opinion of the Public in *London*; for when Mr. *Sheridan* made his last Essay in that Capital, notwithstanding the vast Influence of Novelty, which he then carried with him, he was generally seen *once*, and then universally neglected: (To which Accident we are indebted for his happy Return to rescue this Country from Destruction.) But Mr. *Barry*, for many Years, has supported *Covent-Garden* Theatre; and every Year, has increased his Reputation.

Mr. *Barry*'s long Absence has deprived him of the Opportunities of deserving the public Favour, in this Kingdom; but, his Friends affirm, his Conduct and Performance have ever been as much approved in *England*, as Mr. *Sheridan*'s have been censured among us; of which the following Facts are undoubted Evidence.

Mr. *Sheridan*, say they, has several Times provoked the Town to rise up against him; and once, when this Country was unhappily divided by Party, he officiously obtruded himself on one Side, against their Liking; and, as a Manager, took every Step in his Power, to widen the national Division. On this Occasion, he went so far as to give out a Play, which he was convinced, would create a Disturbance; and if all Parties had not wisely united in condemning such unwarrantable Behaviour, the Blood of many Gentlemen might have been spilled that Night. Could he, who foresaw there must be a Riot, foresee in what it might have ended? And what Degree of public Favour must that Man deserve, who was capable of coolly planning such a Scene of Blood, as that was likely to have proved, in order to inhanche his own Merit with a Party that disclaimed him?

but

But the only Tumult of which Mr. *Barry* was in any Sort the Occasion (and of that he was the innocent Occasion) was, when a capricious Manager, at the Hazard of his own Ruin, had determined not to engage him; the Public stood up, and insisted that a satisfactory Reason should be given for Mr. *Barry*'s not being employed, or, that they would suffer no Play to be acted in that House. The Manager not being able to give the Answer they required, Mr. *Barry* was immediately engaged; for the Managers in *England* always submit to the Public.

Mr. *Sheridan*'s long Possession of the only Theatre that for many Years has been open in this City is no Argument in his Favour; as it was by his own Contrivance that the other was shut up, which, in Fact, was depriving the Public, during all that Time, at least, of one-half of their Diversions. Mr. *Barry* therefore does not intrude upon Mr. *Sheridan*; he is only restoring Matters to the same Situation, in which Mr. *Sheridan* found them.

As Mr. *Sheridan* had no Manner of Title to the sole Direction of dramatic Entertainments in this Kingdom, Mr. *Barry* could not have Notice of any such Title; but it can be proved, Mr. *Sheridan* had full Notice of Mr. *Barry*'s Undertaking before he laid out any Part of his Fortune upon it, which will make a material Change in the Conclusion of any Argument that can be drawn from Notice on either Side.

WHEN Mr. *Barry* was in this Kingdom in the Year 1754, his Performance gave such general Satisfaction, that he was encouraged by many of the Nobility and Gentry, as well as Citizens of the greatest Eminence, to build a Theatre, and settle

settle in *Dublin*. He accepted the Invitation, with
 a Heart full of Gratitude for such a signal Mark
 of their Approbation. He treated immediately
 for several Pieces of Ground, but could not find
 any to his Purpose 'till about the Month of *May*,
 1757, a Gentleman whom he had impowered,
 when he went to *England*, to transact this Business,
 took a Lease of the Music-Hall in *Crow-Street*,
 for 500 Years, without a Clause of Surrender, at
 a Rent of 50 *l.* a Year, for which Mr. *Barry* paid
 a Fine of 500 *l.* But, as he had observed that the
 confined Dimension of the Stage in *Smock-Alley*
 must for ever prevent any grand Spectacle from
 being exhibited there; to avoid this insuperable
 Inconvenience, and to enable him to build the
Stage Part of his Theatre as ample and magnifi-
 cent as that of *Drury-Lane*, he enlarged himself
 with several other Lots of contiguous Ground,
 which he took for the like Term of 500 Years,
 without a Clause of Surrender, at the additional
 Rent of 128 *l.* a Year, and paid other Fines, a-
 mounting to 400 *l.* and for carrying on the Work,
 which was too extensive an Undertaking for Mr.
Barry's private Circumstances, a Subscription was
 immediately opened, which very soon was filled.
 Builders were contract'd with, Materials were
 bought, the Musick-Hall was thrown down, and
 the Building, which is now almost ready for Roof-
 ing, was in considerable Forwardness before the
 opening of the present Session of Parliament.
 Mr. *Barry*, finding every Thing hitherto proceed
 to his Expectation, and foreseeing no probable
 Cause that could prevent the completing of his
 Theatre, by the Beginning of next Winter; that
 he might not be disappointed of Performers, as
 soon as he should have Occasion for them, con-
 tracted with a very large and excellent Company,
 selected from both the Theatres in *London*, (as he
 intends, besides Mrs. *Fitz-Henry*, to employ only
 five

five or six of the best of Mr. *Sheridan's* Players) who are engaged to act with him next Winter in *Crow-Street*. Their Sallaries amount to a very large Sum, for which he is personally bound, whether he can employ them or not. He has also laid out a considerable Sum in the Purchase of Cloaths, and has a fine Collection of Scenes now painting for him by one of the ablest Hands in *England*. In short; his whole Fortune is embarked on this one Bottom; he stands Security besides for several thousand Pounds, which, should he now be ship-wrecked, he never can hope to discharge: His Person must inevitably be thrown into Gaol, there to continue 'till he starves, or dies of Disappointment and Despair.

Now it is insisted, as Mr. *Sheridan* had Notice of Mr. *Barry's* Project from the Beginning, it was incumbent on him, if he had not premeditatedly planned the utter Ruin of Mr. *Barry*, to give him a timely Caution not to proceed, or lay out his Money, as he intended to apply for, and had Hopes of obtaining, an Act of Parliament to frustrate his whole Design. But since Mr. *Sheridan* sat looking on, so long; since he permitted Mr. *Barry* to proceed so far, that he cannot possibly recede, to make a Law, *ex post facto*, to undo an innocent Man, is a distressing Hardship, to which the Parliament of *Ireland*, were there no other Reason to direct them, can never grant their Concurrence.

2. THE Subscribers to *Smock-Alley* Theatre will put their Debentures upon a better Foundation than ever, if they can but persuade Mr. *Sheridan* to furnish better Entertainment at his House than Mr. *Barry* intends to exhibit at *Crow-Street*. This Method will effectually secure them. But

does not the private Property of Mr. *Barry's* Subscribers equally claim our Regard? Does not that throw this Argument out of the Debate? No; for if this Bill should take Place, Mr. *Barry's* Subscribers must *absolutely* lose their Money; should it be rejected, Mr. *Sheridan's* only run a *Chance of losing Part of theirs*; wherefore this Argument, if it has any Weight at all, concludes in Favour of the new Theatre.

BESIDES, Mr. *Sheridan's* Subscribers, (some of whom are also on Mr. *Barry's* List) are Persons of such Rank and Fortune, such Honour and Generosity, such Candor and Humanity, as never can be persuaded, to pursue any extraordinary Measures, to secure the trifling Stake, in which they are concerned, at the Expence of the utter Ruin of Mr. *Barry* and his Family.

BUT, however considerable Mr. *Sheridan's* Subscribers may be, in Rank, Dignity and Fortune; however their private Interest may be affected; there is another Class of Men (with due Reverence to all others) of greater Dignity, of greater Importance; whose Privileges are more sacred, and whose Property is more inviolable; THE BODY CORPORATE OF THIS ANCIENT AND MOST LOYAL METROPOLIS, whose Rights, in this Question, are so inseparably connected with Mr. *Barry's*, that he cannot be injured, without doing them a Wrong. The LORD MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN, either by Charter or Prescription, has an acknowledged, an undisputed Privilege, which often, and very lately, has been exercised, of licencing a Theatre for the Entertainment of the Citizens. A Privilege highly honourable to the City, of which, without some stronger Reasons than hitherto

thereto exist, without some Abuse, or Forfeiture on their Part; they humbly conceive, they will not be deprived, in Favour of any private Person whatever.

UPON the Whole, Mr. *Barry's* Friends conclude, as the Bill now sued for must inevitably prove an Injury to the Public, in the most rational of their Entertainments; as it necessarily tends to deprave the Taste, and corrupt the Morals of the People; as that, in Time, must prove a Reflection on the Nation; as it will encourage Neglect and Indolence in a Manager, on one Hand, and Insolence and Licentiousness, on the other; as it must be the unavoidable Ruin of an innocent Man and his Family; and as it will be an immediate Violation and Infringement of the Rights, Liberties and Franchises of the Body Corporate of the City of *Dublin*, they humbly hope the Parliament, if Mr. *Sheridan* should petition for such a Bill, will consider it as an arrogant Attempt to impose upon the Justice and Understanding of the Nation; and, as such, will reject it, with the Indignation and Contempt it most certainly deserves.

HERE I did intend to have acted the Moderator between these warm Disputants, and to have offered my own impartial Sentiments on the Occasion; but as these Sheets have extended to a Length, beyond what I had intended; and as I am certain the Reader, by this Time, is heartily tired, as I confess I am; I shall defer giving my Thoughts (if there should be Occasion for them) to some other Opportunity, leaving the Matter, upon what already has been so fully argued on both Sides, to the Determination of the candid and impartial Public.

F I N I S.

there exist without some Acts, or Fugitives
on their Part; they humbly conceive, that
may be believed, in favour of any private
answer.

Upon the Whole, Mr. W. has
said, as the bill now is, it must
prove an injury to the Nation, in respect
of their Rights, and consequently
deprive the State, and perhaps the
Nation; as that, in fact, must prove
injury on the Nation; as I will encourage
them and justice in a stranger, on one
and another, and consequently, on the
one, and the other, and the Nation of
Man and his family; and as it will be
their Justice and justice, and of the
Justice and justice of the Body of
the City of Boston, they humbly hope
that the Bill, with justice, is as an
attempt to impose upon the Justice and
understanding of the Nation; and, as such,
it is in the indignation and Contempt
of the Nation.

It is I did intend to have said the
between the two Disputes, and to have
said the two Disputes on the one
hand, but as the Disputes have extended to
I might say, what I had intended; and as
the Disputes, by the same, is hourly
increasing, as I am; I did not give my
Thoughts (which should be a Disputes for them)
to some other Opportunity, leaving the Disputes
upon what already has been fully argued on both
sides, to the Determination of the Court and
the People.

